No decision has been taken to accord approval to power generating units of private sector to operate coal mines.

Consultation with the State Electricity Boards prior to increase in prices of Coal

2328. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state

(a) whether Electricity Boards of various States were consulted or given prior intimation about the recent increase in coal prices; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) and (b) The Electricity Boards of various States were not consulted or given prior intimation about the increase in coal prices effected on 28.12.1991.

However, Department of Power in the Ministry of Power and Non-Conventional Energy Sources was consulted.

Commissioning of Rajmahal Open Cast Coal Project of ECL

2329. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Rajmahal open cast coal project of ECL has been linked to the requirements of NTPC Farakka and Kahalgaon Power Projects;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to delay in the commissioning of the Rajmahal project, Kahalgaon power project is lagging behind; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) to (c) Rajmahal Opencast (Expansion) project of Eastern Coalfields Ltd. is being developed for an output capacity of 10.50 m.t. of coal per annum. The coal supply from this project is linked to Farakka and Kahalgaon Super Thermal Power Projects of NTPC. The progress of implementation of this project is satisfactory and no delay is anticipated in its completion by the scheduled date i.e. March, 1995.

Reduction of coal miners on suggestion of World Bank

2330. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that World Bank has suggested reduction of 50,000 coal miners from various collieries; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) and (b) No. Sir. It is not a fact that the World Bank identified 50,000 personnel in Coal India Ltd. as surplus staff who need to be retrenched. A three member World Bank team was in India during January-February, 1991 for review of the progress of on-going projects. This team during their meetings (in Coal India Ltd. and Department of Coal) had discussed various issues related to coal projects including *inter alia* the ways and means to improve financial performance of Coal Sector and the modalities of redeployment of surplus workers if any, from mines that are closed down due to depletion of coal reserves and reduction in unproductive manpower with a view to improving output per manshift.

These points were discussed generally and neither any figure about excess number of workers was mentioned nor was any specific suggestion received from World Bank.